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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

7 May 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Erskine Regarding Military Mission
in Guatemala

1. There is no plan or intention in the Department of Defense of removing the mission in Guatemala without prior agreement with State and CIA.

2. Mr. Godel's remarks to Mr. Jackson and Mr. Radius pertained to the subject of sending the military negotiators through Guatemala in the company of Ambassador Willauer of Honduras.

3. This proposal was generated in State and was not checked with CIA but developed as follows:

a. State made a direct demand to General Webster, a member of the Inter-American Defense Board, to have our military team go through Guatemala enroute to Honduras in company with Ambassador Willauer.

b. General Webster reported the matter to General Erskine and requested a proper directive from the Secretary of Defense.

c. Mr. Godel's remarks to the Special Assistants were directed to Mr. Radius and implied that State should stop sending instructions to the working-level people in the Pentagon and should follow command channels. He stated that if they did not cease such action that he, Mr. Godel, would recommend an official letter from the Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State on the subject.

d. Subsequently Mr. Radius asked Mr. Godel not to take the matter up officially inasmuch as the entire request was withdrawn.

e. Mr. Radius apparently followed up the matter, which resulted in the telephone call from Mr. Dulles to Asst. Secretary Anderson.

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3. There is no concern at General Erskine's level about the operation in progress except to say that they would like to have a more thorough fill-in than they have had to date on the support required from the Department of Defense. General Erskine feels that he is "working in the dark" and needs information which he can use in generating and implementing the support requirements.

4. I have just learned that State again today made further requests on this same subject directly to the working-level people in General Webster's shop.

H. D. BALMER
Chief, Planning and
Program Coordination